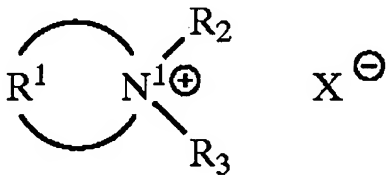
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

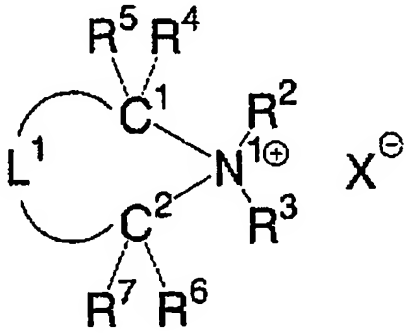
1. (withdrawn): An image forming material comprising, on a substrate, an image forming layer which includes at least (A) a novolac type phenolic resin containing phenol as a structural unit, (B) a photo-thermal converting agent, and (C) a compound represented by the following formula (1-1):



Formula (1-1)

wherein in formula (1-1), R^1 represents a residue which, together with N', forms a ring structure; R^2 and R^3 each independently represent an organic group and may combine with each other to form a ring structure; at least one of R^2 and R^3 may combine with R' to form a ring structure; and X^- represents a conjugate base of an organic acid or an inorganic acid.

2. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (1-1) is represented by the following formula (1-1-a):

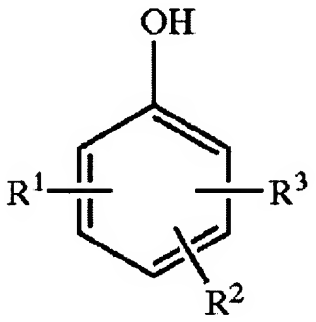


Formula (1-1-a)

wherein in formula (1-1-a), R^2 and R^3 each independently represent an organic group and may combine with each other to form a ring structure; X^- represents a conjugate base of an organic acid or an inorganic acid; R^4 through R^7 each independently represent a hydrogen atom or a substituent, may be the same as or different from one another, and may combine with one another to form a ring; R^4 through R^7 may each combine with L', R^2 or R^3 to form a ring structure; when a bond between L' and C' or C^2 is a double bond or a triple bond, some of R^4 through R^7 do/does not exist in accordance with the existence of the double bond or the triple bond; L' represents a single bond or a divalent linkage group which, together with $-C^1-N^1-C^2-$, forms a ring structure; R^4 and R^5 may represent an identical atom or an identical substituent so that a bond between C^1 and R^4, which is also R^5, becomes a double bond; and R^6 and R^7 may represent an identical atom or an identical substituent so that a bond between C^2 and R^6, which is also R^7, becomes a double bond.

3. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 1, wherein a mass of the compound represented by formula (1-1) is 50% or less of a mass of a total solids content in the image forming layer.

4. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 1, wherein the novolac type phenolic resin is a resin obtained by condensing phenol, a substituted phenol represented by the following formula (I), and an aldehyde:



Formula (I)

wherein in formula (I), R^1 and R^2 each independently represent a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, or a halogen atom.

5. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 4, wherein a phenol content in monomers that constitute the novolac type phenolic resin is from 21 to 90% by mole.

6. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 4, wherein a weight average molecular weight of the novolac type phenolic resin is from 500 to 50000.

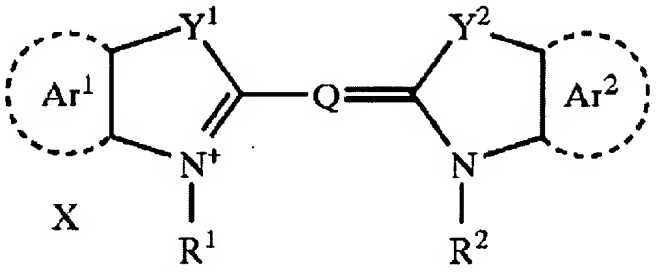
7. (withdrawn): The image forming material according to claim 4, wherein a proportion of the novolac type phenolic resin to a total solids content in the image forming layer is from 0.1 to 20% by mass.

8. (currently amended): A positive image forming material comprising, on a substrate, a positive image forming layer which includes at least (A) a novolac type phenolic resin containing phenol as a structural unit, (B) a photo-thermal converting agent, and (C) an onium salt represented by the following formula ~~(1-2)~~(1-2-A):

~~Formula (1-2) X^-M^+~~ Formula (1-2-A): $R^A\text{-}SO_3^-M^+$

wherein, in formula ~~(1-2)~~(1-2-A), ~~X^-~~ R^A represents a substituent ~~an anion~~ including at least one substituent that has an alkali dissociative proton and M^+ represents a ~~counter cation selected from the group consisting of a~~ sulfonium ion, ~~an iodonium ion, an ammonium ion, a phosphonium ion, and an oxonium ion and~~

wherein the positive image forming material does not include a crosslinking agent and wherein the photo-thermal converting agent is represented by the following formula (a):



Formula (a)

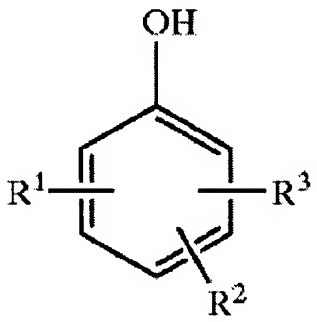
wherein in formula (a), R^1 and R^2 each independently represent an alkyl group having 1 to 12 carbon atoms, and the alkyl group may have a substituent selected from an alkoxy group, an aryl group, an amide group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, a hydroxyl group, a sulfo group or a carboxyl group; Y^1 and Y^2 each independently represent an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom, a selenium atom, a dialkylmethylene group or a –CH=CH-; Ar^1 and Ar^2 each independently represent an aromatic hydrocarbon group and may have a substituent selected from an alkyl group, an alkoxy group, a halogen atom, or an alkoxy carbonyl group; in Ar^1, the carbon atom adjacent to Y^1 and a carbon atom adjacent to said carbon atom may belong to another ring that is condensed with Ar^1; in Ar^2, the carbon atom adjacent to Y^2 and a carbon atom adjacent to said carbon atom may be members of another ring that is condensed with Ar^2; X represents a counter ion necessary for neutralizing an electric charge, which is not required when the cation moiety of the formula (a) has an anionic substituent; and Q represents a polymethine group selected from a pentamethine group, a heptamethine group or a nonamethine group comprising, in the methine chain thereof, three consecutive carbon atoms that are members of a cyclohexene ring or a cyclopentene ring.

9. (canceled).

10. (currently amended): The positive image forming material according to claim 8, wherein a mass of the compound represented by formula ~~(1-2)~~(1-2-A) is 50% or less of a mass of a total solids content in the image forming layer.

11. (previously presented): The positive image forming material according to claim 8, wherein the novolac type phenolic resin is a resin obtained by condensing phenol, a substituted phenol represented by the following formula (I), and an aldehyde:

General Formula (I)



wherein in formula (I), R^1 and R^2 each independently represent a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, or a halogen atom and R^3 represents an alkyl group having 3 to 6 carbon atoms or a cycloalkyl group having 3 to 6 carbon atoms.

12. (previously presented): The positive image forming material according to claim 11, wherein a phenol content in monomers that constitute the novolac type phenolic resin is from 21 to 90% by mole.

13. (previously presented): The positive image forming material according to claim 11, wherein a weight average molecular weight of the novolac type phenolic resin is from 500 to 50000.

14. (previously presented): The positive image forming material according to claim 11, wherein a proportion of the novolac type phenolic resin to a total solids content in the image forming layer is from 0.1 to 20% by mass.

15. (canceled).

16. (previously presented): The positive image forming material according to claim 8, further comprising a resin intermediate layer between the substrate and the positive image forming layer.